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✓ Latest release

Labour Force Status of Families

Family level labour force status estimates, including the number and type of families with one or two employed parents, and jobless families

Reference period June 2024

Released 22/10/2024

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Key statistics

In June 2024:

- there were 7.6 million families, an increase of over 1.0 million since June 2014.
- there were 1.4 million jobless families, which represents 19% of all families.
- 284,000 one parent families were jobless.
- Almost three-quarters (73%) of the 2.2 million couple families with children aged 0-14 years had two employed parents.

What is a family?

A family is defined as two or more related people who live in the same household, such as couples with or without children (including same sex couples), couples with dependants, single parents, and siblings living together. At least one person in the family must be 15 years or over.

A household is one or more people usually resident in the same private dwelling. It may contain a single family, multiple families, or unrelated people. The main differences between estimates for households and estimates for families are that multi-family households are split into their component family units (couple families, one parent families or other families) and households without families (group households and people living alone) are not included in families estimates.

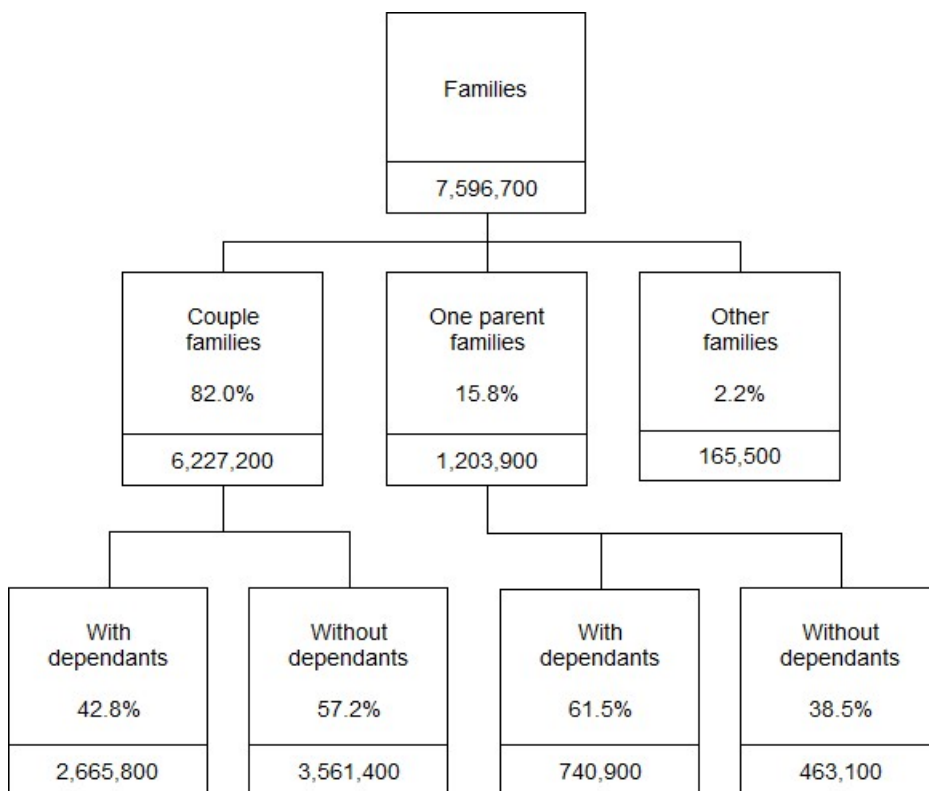
Families can be classed as having, or not having, dependants. There are two kinds of dependants:

- children under 15 years
- dependent students aged 15 to 24 years who are attending school or studying full-time at a tertiary education institution and living with their parents/guardians

See the [Labour Force Status of Families methodology \(/methodologies/labour-force-status-families-methodology/jun-2024\)](/methodologies/labour-force-status-families-methodology/jun-2024) for more information.

Flowchart of main family types

Flowchart of family types



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All families

In June 2024 there were 7.6 million families. Of these:

- 6.2 million (82%) were couple families
- 1.2 million (16%) were one parent families - with 78% of these having single mothers (down from 80% in 2023)
- 166,000 (2%) were classified as 'other families', where at least two people were related in some way other than as a couple or as a parent and child (such as adult-age siblings)

There were 3.4 million families with children or dependants, of which 81% had children aged 0-14 years.

Jobless families

A jobless family is defined as a family where each family member aged over 15 years was unemployed, retired or otherwise not in the labour force. While the family may be 'jobless', as there can be more than one family

in a household, there may be families that are jobless but living in a household with someone employed.

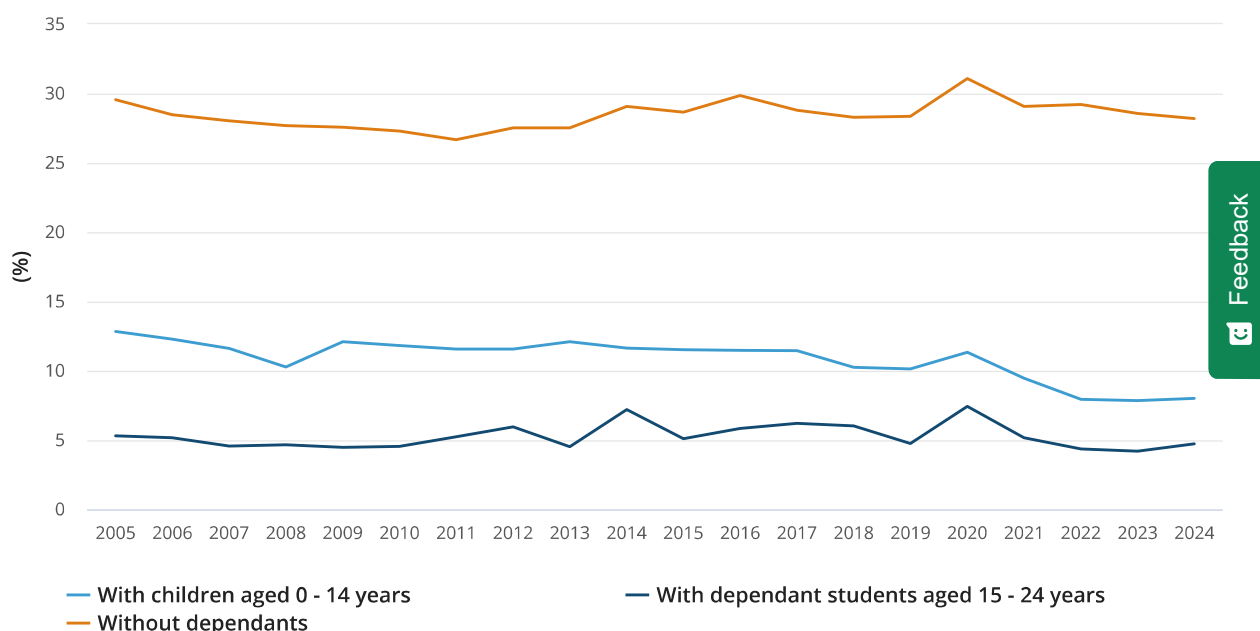
In June 2024, there were 1.4 million jobless families (19% of all families). Of these:

- The majority (almost 1.2 million) were families without dependants (which includes retirees)
- 252,000 had dependants (up from 240,000 in June 2023), representing over 7% of all families with dependants

Around 3% of couple families with children, and 3% of couple families with dependants, were jobless. Of all families with children under 15, 8% were jobless.

There were 424,000 children aged 0-14 years who were living in jobless families (up from 408,000 in June 2023).

Proportion of families that are jobless, by age of youngest dependant



Jobless couple families with dependants

There were 75,000 jobless couple families with dependants (3% of all couple families with dependants) in June 2024. This was down from 80,000 jobless couple families with dependants in June 2023.

In June 2024, 68,000 of jobless couple families had children aged 0-14. This equated to 136,000 children aged 0-14 years in these families.

Jobless one parent families with dependants

There were 176,000 jobless one parent families with dependants in June 2024 (24% of one parent families with dependants). This was up from 160,000 (23% of one parent families with dependants) in June 2023.

In June 2024, 54% of jobless one parent families had children under 15. This equated to 288,000 children aged 0-14 years in these families.

Jobless families without dependants

In June 2024 there were almost 1.2 million jobless families without dependants, which represented 28% of all families without dependants. Of all jobless families without dependants:

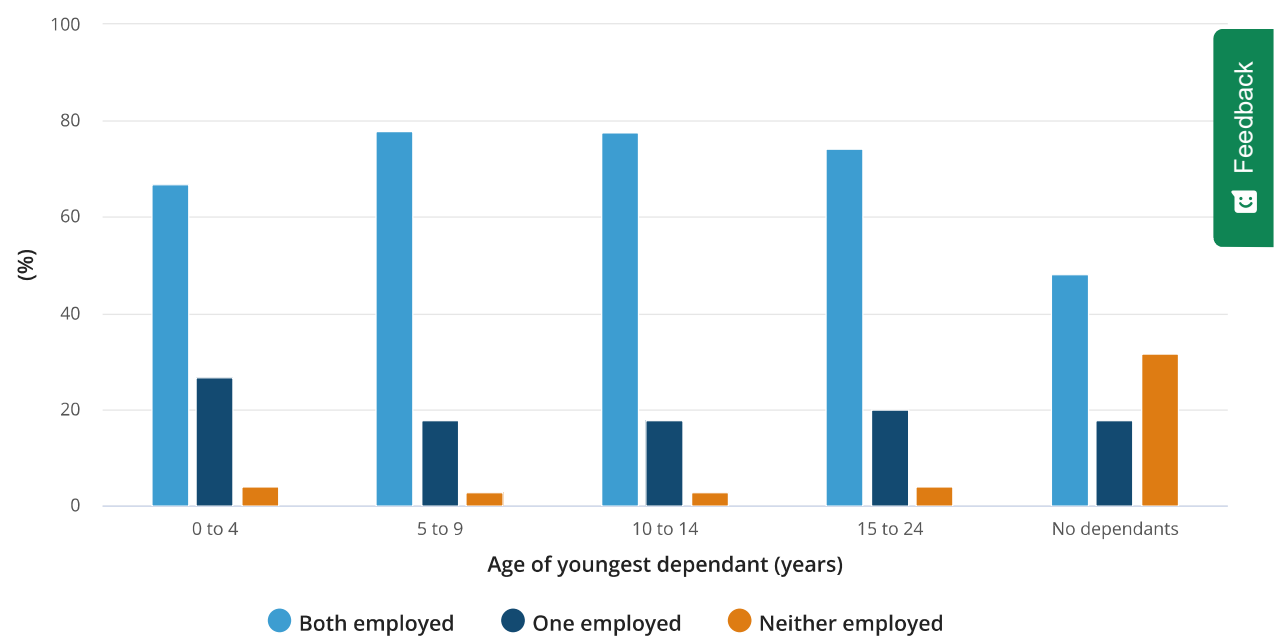
- 1.0 million (88%) were couple families
- 107,000 (9%) were one parent families

Couple families

In June 2024, there were 6.2 million couple families, including:

- 2.2 million couple families with children aged 0-14 years
- 2.7 million couple families with dependants aged 0-24 years
- 3.6 million couple families without dependants

Couple families by employed status and age of youngest dependant, June 2024 (a)



(a) The sum of each group does not sum to 100% as some family members will have a labour force status of 'Not determined'.

Couple families with dependants

Of the 2.7 million couple families with dependants:

- 2.5 million (95%) couple families with dependants had one or both parents employed
- 1.9 million (73%) had both parents employed, of which 1.6 million had at least one child aged 0-14

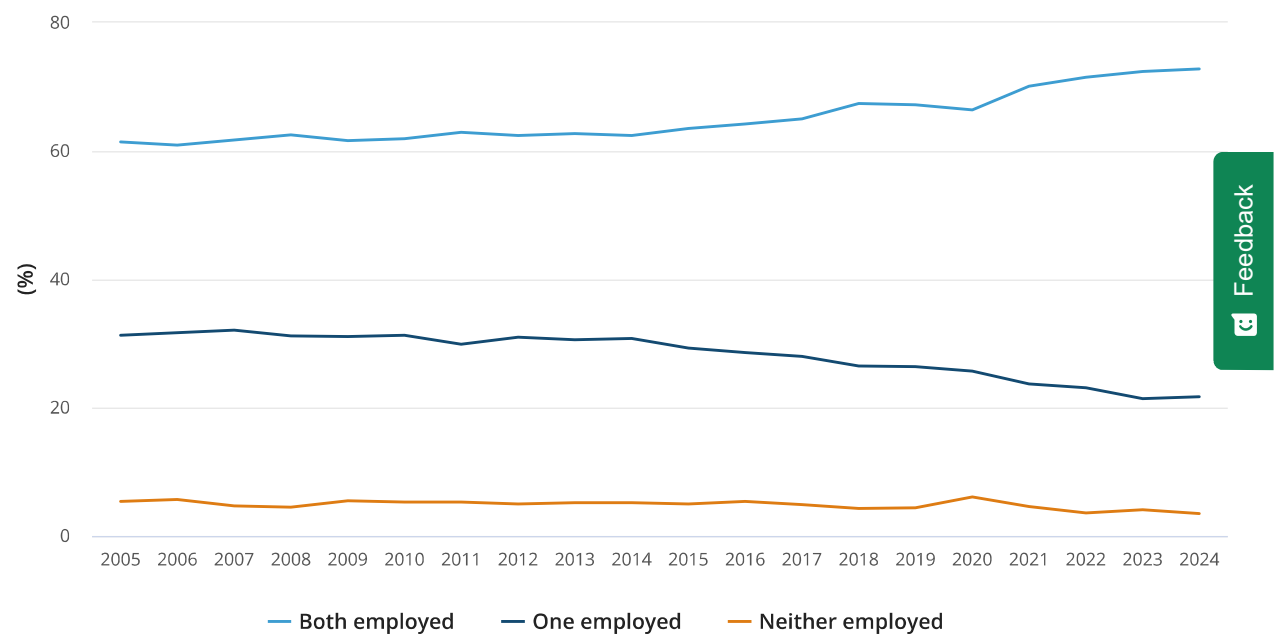
In June 2024, of the 2.2 million couple families with children aged 0-14 years:

- 73% had both parents employed
- 22% had one parent employed
- 4% had neither parent employed
- 35% had both parents working full-time
- 3% had both parents working part-time
- 35% had one parent working full-time and one parent working part-time

There were 478,000 couple families (8% of all couple families) where the youngest dependant was aged 15–24 years.

Since 2005, the proportion of couple families with children or dependants where both parents were employed has increased from 60% to 73%, while the proportion with just one parent employed has decreased from 31% to 22%.

Couple families with dependants, by employed status (a)

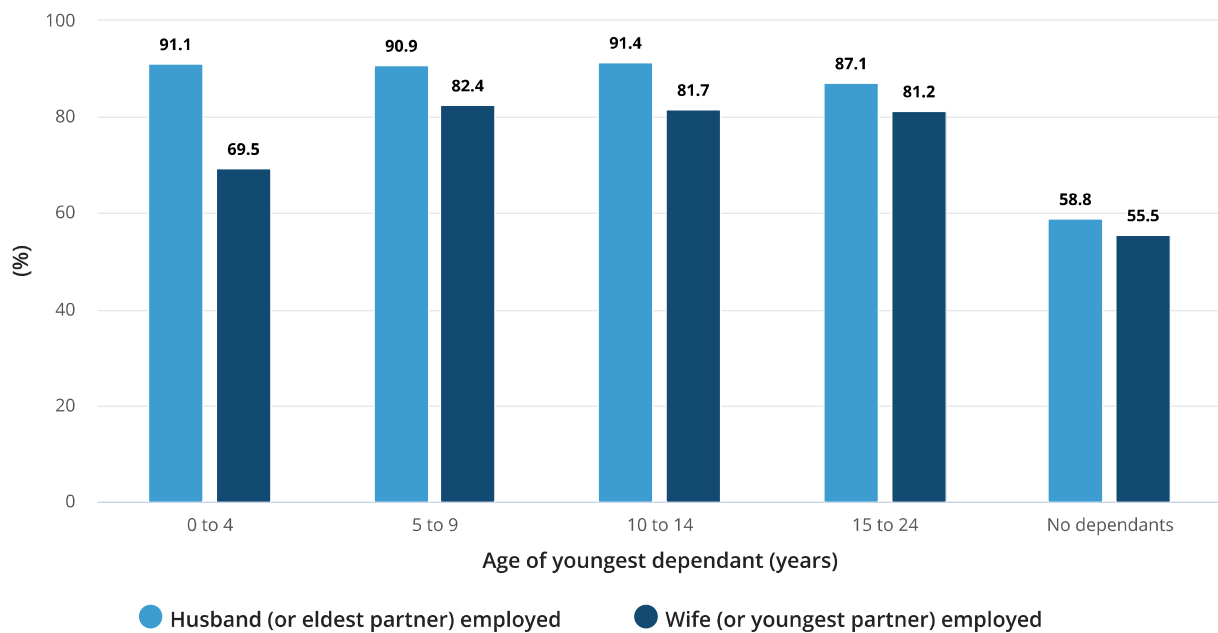


(a) The sum of each group does not sum to 100% as some family members will have a labour force status of 'Not determined'.

In June 2024, of couple families with dependants, 90% had a husband/partner who was employed and 78% had a wife/partner who was employed.

The proportion of couple families where the husband/partner was employed was 91% where the youngest child was aged 0-4 years, and 87% where the youngest dependant was aged 15-24. The proportion of couple families where the wife/partner was employed was 69% where the youngest children aged 0-4 years and 81% where the youngest dependant was aged 15-24.

Couples families by employment characteristics and age of youngest dependant, June 2024



One parent families

There were 1.2 million one parent families in June 2024, accounting for 16% of all families. Of these one parent families, 741,000 (62%) had dependants (including children under 15).

The majority (78%) of one parent families with children and dependants were headed by a single mother.

The parent was employed in 70% of one-parent families with dependants. Of these:

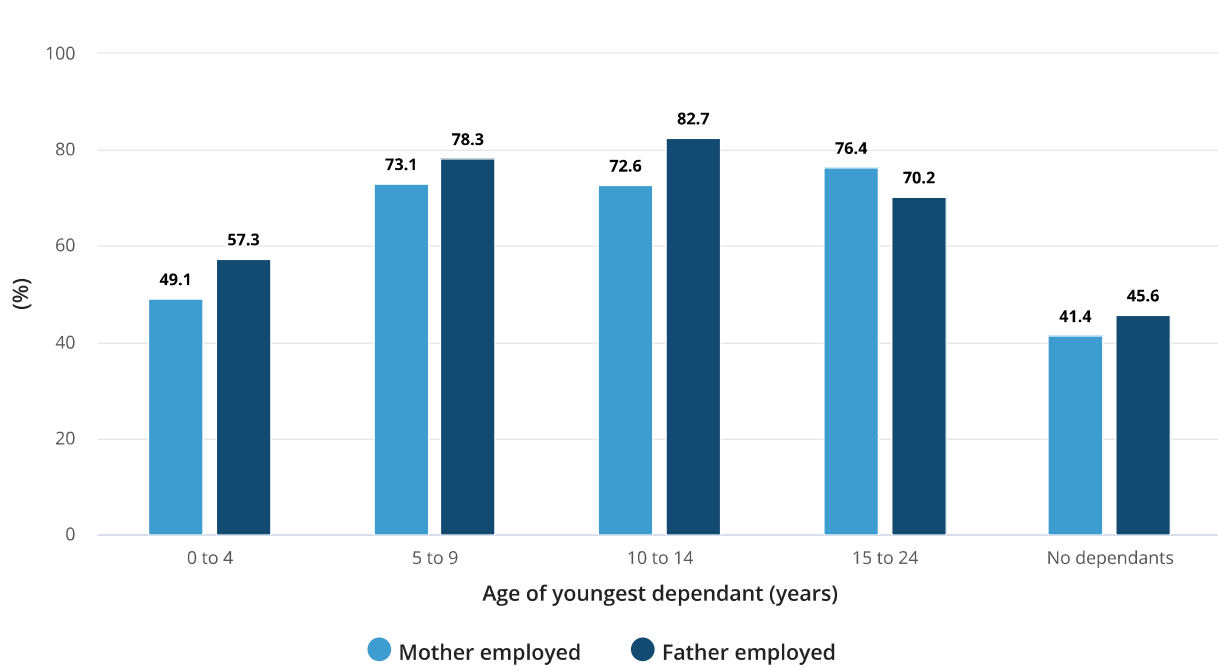
- 395,000 had an employed single mother
- 121,000 had an employed single father

In one parent families with dependants, 68% of single mothers were employed compared with 75% of single fathers.

Just under three-quarters (73%) of families with employed single mothers and dependants had mothers aged between 35 and 54 years.

The proportion of one parent families with dependants that had an employed parent was lowest when the youngest dependant was aged 0-4 years.

One parent families by employed status and age of youngest dependant, June 2024



Households

Estimates for the number of households, types of households and average number of people per household are based on independent demographic counts of households and household size which are used in benchmarking the families estimates.

In June 2024, there were 10.7 million households (in private dwellings). Of these:

- 7.1 million were households with one family
- 227,000 were households with more than one family (multiple family households)
- 408,000 were group households of non-relatives
- 2.9 million households were people living alone

Average household size was 2.5 people in June 2024, down from 2.6 people in June 2014.

Data downloads

Tables

[Download all \(15.04 MB\)](#)

Table 1. Family types

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Table 2. Families by state and territory

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Table 3. Labour force characteristics of families

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Table 4. Jobless families and their dependants

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Table 5. Families by age of dependent children

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Table 6. Families by number of dependent children

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Table 7. Families by characteristics of wives, partners and mothers and age of youngest dependent child

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Table 8. Families by state and territory and age of dependent children

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Table 9. Families by characteristics of parents and age of youngest dependent child

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Table 10. Families with no dependent children by characteristics of wives, partners and mothers

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Table H1. Households and average household size (experimental estimates)

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Labour Force Status of Families microdata in DataLab

Labour Force Status of Families microdata for June 2024 is now available in ABS DataLab, released as a supplementary file for the [Longitudinal Labour Force \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/longitudinal-labour-force-australia\)](/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/longitudinal-labour-force-australia) (LLFS) microdata. All existing users of the LLFS microdata will automatically get access to the Labour Force Status of Families file and new users can apply for access to both files.

A detailed data item list for the Labour Force Status of Families microdata is available in [Microdata and TableBuilder: Labour Force Status of Families \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/labour-force-status-families\)](/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/labour-force-status-families).

Labour Force Status of Families in TableBuilder

The June 2024 Labour Force Status of Families Tablebuilder file will be released in early 2025. This release will also include data for June 2022 and June 2023.

Previous catalogue number

This release previously used catalogue number 6224.0.55.001.

Methodology

[Labour Force Status of Families methodology, June 2024](#)

